Parliamentary Assembly
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COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Recommendation 691 (1973)[1]

Situation of Mediterranean forestry

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Having taken note of the report of its Committee on Agriculture concerning the situation of Mediterranean forestry (Doc. 3174) ;

2. Referring to its Recommendation 579 (1970) on the state of forestry in Europe ;

3. Considering that forests are, and will continue to be an important source of goods and services which are vital to the life and survival of mankind ;

4. Considering that forests in Europe, particularly in the Mediterranean basin, are a stabilising factor as regards climate, hydro-geological balance and the preservation of plant and animal species ;

5. Having regard to the particular nature of the Mediterranean forest, which necessitates special conservation measures entailing heavy investment ;

6. Having regard to the ever greater tourist demands upon the Mediterranean forest, which increase the risks of fires and destruction ;

7. Considering that all Europeans could benefit from proper management of the Mediterranean forest, and should therefore contribute towards the cost,

8. Recommends that the Committee of Ministers invite the governments of the member States :

a. to ensure that timber production in the Mediterranean region is concentrated on areas of high soil fertility particularly suitable for forestry, while forests with poor soil should be developed as recreation areas, those who maintain such areas being suitably paid ;

b. to ensure that dilapidated forests in the Mediterranean area are restored, so that they may perform their functions of protecting the soil and maintaining a hydro-geological balance ;

c. to ensure that fire control methods are improved, both through properly organised fire-fighting services (adequately equipped units) and through specific regulations governing forest management (forest planning, provision of water trenches and fire breaks, planting of species with low flammability) ;

d. to regulate grazing rights in the Mediterranean forest, while respecting rights of ownership ;

e. to establish action programmes for the entire Mediterranean area as part of an authentic regional planning policy, bearing in mind the essential role of forests in the conservation of natural resources and the protection of the man-made environment ;

f. to make the necessary financial provision for effective arrangements for protecting, extending and improving the Mediterranean forest ;

1. Assembly debate on 22 January 1973 (19th Sitting) (see Doc. 3217, report of the Committee on Agriculture). Text adopted by the Assembly on 22 January 1973 (19th Sitting).

g. to establish a European budgetary system whereby all European countries contribute financially towards the enhancement of the Mediterranean area according to their resources (budgetary equalisation) ;

h. to encourage all official and private projects aimed at teaching the public, particularly young people, the elementary rules of forest protection with special reference to the Mediterranean forest and its particular climatic conditions ;

i. to arrange for the International Centre for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies to prepare the programmes referred to in paragraph (e) above on a basis of close international cooperation, and providing the Centre with the necessary funds ;

j. to encourage research into the new requirements of a modern forestry policy in the Mediterranean area, particularly a study of the new relationship between man and nature ;

k. to have a study made of the implications of the Mansholt Plan regarding the afforestation of a proportion of farming land and of its foreseeable effects on the Mediterranean forest.